



ECEAP

WASHINGTON STATE'S



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
AND
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Preschool for low-income and at-risk children in Washington State

Why Are Early Childhood Programs Important?

Research studies often find a correlation between child poverty and poor school performance. Comparisons of poverty rates and performance on the 4th grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) tests mirror these findings. Many studies also demonstrate that quality school readiness programs such as ECEAP are successful in counteracting some of the effects of poverty on child learning. Among the research findings:

- ◆ *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*, the National Research Council Report commissioned by the Department of Education, recommends the establishment and expansion of comprehensive early childhood programs substantially similar to services currently provided by Head Start and ECEAP. <http://books.nap.edu/catalog/9745.html>
- ◆ The Perry Preschool Project estimates **the public saves seven dollars for each dollar invested in quality preschool programs**. Study findings indicate “Almost a third again as many” of the group who attended preschool as those who didn’t “graduated from regular or adult high school or received General Education Development certification (71% vs. 54%).” <http://www.highscope.org/Research/PerryProject/perrymain.htm>
- ◆ *Six County Study of the Effects of Smart Start Child Care on Kindergarten Entry Skills* found that children who did not attend quality early childhood programs prior to school entry were almost twice as likely to score poorly on measures of behavior problems in kindergarten as those who attended North Carolina’s Smart Start programs. <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~smartstart/>
- ◆ *RAND Corporation Report - Improving Student Achievement* shows that National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores are higher in states that have more children in public pre-kindergarten classes. The report declares “Our results show that resources can make significant differences for minority and lower-SES students in public schools...” <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR924/MR924.sum.pdf>
- ◆ *Michigan School Readiness Program Evaluation Through Age 10*, completed in January 2002, further demonstrates the lasting progress achieved by at-risk children who participated in high quality preschool programs compared to those who did not. <http://www.highscope.org/Research/MsrpEvaluation/msrpmain.htm>

ECEAP: Ready to Succeed!